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For Immediate Release

LITTER HURTS FACT SHEET

SALT LAKE CITY—The Utah Department of Transportation has taken a pioneering approach in developing and launching Litter Hurts. Extensive research, which demonstrated a shift in recent years from deliberate to unintentional littering, was the catalyst for UDOT becoming the first in the country to focus its efforts exclusively on unsecured cargo. The results of the campaign, which launched in 2008, have helped change behavior with a message that has resonated locally and has been recognized nationally. The following are facts about Litter Hurts:

Campaign Progress

- Litter Hurts helped reduce calls to the Utah Highway Patrol regarding lost cargo on roads in Salt Lake County by 17 percent and debris-related accidents by 22 percent in 2008 (versus the same period April 1, 2007 through August 31, 2007).

Advertising/Promotion

- The campaign has included TV commercials, billboards, radio advertisements, posters in the loading docks of retailers throughout Utah, signs at landfill entrances and a traveling display, which features a room furnished with appliances, furniture, accessories and household items recovered from Utah roads.
- A "Lost Items of the Week" campaign, which involves UDOT maintenance workers taking pictures of unusual items found on Utah roads, commenced in late May 2009. The images have been posted on the Litter Hurts Web site, www.LitterHurts.Utah.Gov, and are being promoted through social media and radio advertisements.
- A partnership has recently been developed with the Utah State Parks. Posters encouraging boaters and campers to properly secure their gear will be posted at each park along the Wasatch Front and in Wasatch and Summit counties by July 4.

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- Litter bags with tips on how to properly secure cargo have been created and are being distributed at the fee stations at Wasatch Front landfills.
- Litter Hurts has received 16 national awards including Telly Awards, Hermes Awards, MarCom Awards, Summit International Awards, a Blue Pencil Award and an Ava Award. Additionally, Litter Hurts was a finalist for the National Non-Profit Awards Public Service Campaign of the Year along with the United Way of America and New York Metropolitan Transit Association.

The Problem of Lost Cargo

- Litter is more than just soda cans and plastic bags; it's lost ladders, furniture, pipes, wood, barbeque grills and more. Litter is anything that doesn't belong on Utah's roads.
- More than 25,000 automobile crashes are caused by litter annually on North America roads, including both small items and large debris. There were two fatal crashes on Utah roads as a result of lost debris in 2008.
- Motorists are required by Utah law to properly secure items in their vehicle. Utah passed legislation in 2008 increasing fines to up to \$250 for littering and up to \$500 for lost debris.
- In a statewide survey conducted by Dan Jones & Associates in 2009, 84 percent of Utahns said while driving they have confronted lost items dropped on the road, and 46 percent of Utahns have experienced damage to their automobile because of falling debris from other vehicles.
- Cleaning up litter and debris on Utah's highways costs taxpayers more than \$2 million each year.
- About 8,000 truckloads – each one-ton size – of litter are hauled to landfills in Utah annually.
- According to a 2007 *New York Times* article, nearly 40 percent of roadside litter is made up of large items such as furniture, appliances and yard equipment.
- More information is available at www.LitterHurts.Utah.Gov.